

Ep #127: Complacent Employees
Episode Transcript



LEAD
YOUR
TEAM

*for Female
Entrepreneurs*

with
KRIS PLACHY

The image is a podcast cover with a teal background. On the left, a white box contains the title 'LEAD YOUR TEAM' in large, bold, black serif font, with 'for Female Entrepreneurs' in a smaller, italicized serif font below it. On the right, a photograph of a smiling woman with blonde hair, wearing a white patterned halter top, is shown. Below the photo, a white box contains the text 'with KRIS PLACHY' in a serif font.

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Hey, I'm Kris Plachy, host of the Lead Your Team podcast. Running a million dollar business is not easy. And whether you're just getting started with building your team, or you've been at this for a while, I'm going to bring you honest, specific, and clear practices you can use right now, today, and to improve how well you lead your team. Let's go ahead and get started.

Hello, how are you? Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful. Hope you are having a wonderful day. Thank you for tuning in today. As always, I am so grateful to all of you for your reviews. Thank you for submitting those. If you submitted a review during our journal giveaway and you didn't email us the review with your address, please do so because we can't send you the journal if we don't know who you are and where you live. So just take a screenshot of your review and email it to hello@krisplachy.com with your name and address, and we will send you the journal. And again, just want to thank all of you for doing so. Your reviews were lovely to read, and anyway, just lovely. So thank you. Thank you for doing that.

So I want to talk to you about something today that is kind of a weird topic maybe, but it just got me thinking, because I do help a lot of my clients who've had tenured employees, people who've worked, or team members who've worked with them for a long time. This happens in big companies and small companies. And I think it happens to all of us just period. And so it's kind of a good reminder for us to know this is sort of a natural process, and what do we want to do about it?

So partially the reason I'm bringing this up is I was having a conversation with someone about performance reviews, which I am going to be creating, for lack of a better word, I'm calling it a little snack on the website. You'll find it not quite yet, probably another month or two, but we're preparing an entire course for you on how to pay people. It's going to include how to decide what someone's salary should be, how to do performance reviews, how to give raises, how to give bonuses. It's going to be all encompassing, single course that you can purchase on the website.

So I was having this conversation and we were talking about performance reviews and what kind of happens to people, all of us I think, when we start to get complacent and settle, I think is the way that I like to think about it. We sort of start settling in. Team members do this and I think we do this in other relationships. So what happens though, I think for some of us, when we have worked together a long time, we've had team members for a long time, they've been with us for a long time, is people start to settle in and it's this funky relationship that we have to be careful of because we want our team members to feel comfortable, and happy, and proud, and safe.

All those things matter to our culture and to the success of the business. And yet we also have to be careful that we don't foster sort of complacency and settling where that comfort, safety piece gets so much a part of what they think and feel that they don't really take their job

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seriously anymore. Maybe they start skipping out a little early, or they push a benchmark back a day or two and they figure you won't care, or they make a few extra mistakes, or they start taking more and more time off. Right?

These are all very normal. So this is not like a call-out of a particular type of team member. This is more, I think, a natural part of what happens in relationships. I think you can see this in friendships. I think you can see this in marriages and other relationships that you have with people. We start to sort of take for granted what we have, because it becomes normal. It becomes like part of our day.

And so anyway, back to this conversation, we were talking about performance reviews and I said, "You know, it's almost like every year, it's like you should almost have like a contract. And every year it's a renewal instead of like just a performance review where you get a raise." It's more like it's a performance review, and I've been using the word agreements more. So we make these agreements about what success looks like, and then we do a review of those agreements. And then we decide if we want to renew the agreements.

That's different to me than, "Oh, let's just do your performance review," and then you get a raise and then everything's the same. So I want to invite you to recognize that, if you're experiencing complacency, settling, it's kind of insidious. It's not like there's anything really wrong, but you can kind of feel like maybe especially as entrepreneurs, because we're always thinking of new things. We're always wanting to try something new. We're always... That's part of our problem.

But then you can have team members who stop joining you there. They just want to keep everything the same because it's easier for them, and then they can kind of manage everything. It doesn't feel as disruptive. Right? But working for an entrepreneur is disruptive. That's just the deal. And what I know and have watched in other clients is when you have team members who start to step into that kind of complacency space, it's not your fault or their fault.

They're not doing anything wrong. It's just that that's kind of, I think, our natural tendency. And so as the leader of the business, you have a lot more authority here than you might be giving yourself credit for. And that's what I want you to see. I want you to recognize that you can sharpen that up through your leadership, through making sure that you are doing regular coaching sessions, and one-on-one feedback sessions. That you are doing some sort of performance agreement, review process. But that you are active and engaged in your own feedback, that you are inviting people on your team to participate in and deliver projects that up level them, that invite them back in the day-to-day, you know, this is what my job is.

That's great if you want to work in the government, but that is not what it is to work for an entrepreneur. I think it's critical that everybody knows that, and if you start to feel this kind of oozing into your company, then it's time for you to shake. Let's not blame them. Let's not get

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mad at them. Let's first look at us and say, "Okay, well wait, maybe I'm not holding them accountable. Maybe I'm not inviting them to challenge themselves. Maybe I'm not upping the game for them."

Because again, if I don't, then why would they? They're making nice money. They have a good job. Like, listen, that's human nature. And it's interesting because in my friendships, I noticed this. I like to do stuff. I invite people to go places with me a lot, and very few people do because that's like outside the rules of friendship. Like, "Oh, that challenges me to do something different and hard. And I don't want to do that."

And I like to do that. I don't like complacent relationships. It's boring. I want to be active, and do things, and engage, and try, and experiment, and have fun, and of course laugh, which you guys have heard me say. But most people in a friendship are just like, "Oh, let's hang out." I don't want to just hang out. I don't want to just talk about kids. Right? Like I want to do stuff.

But that's on me. That's not my friendship people's fault. That's me. That's an expectation I have. I have to keep up leveling what I want to create in my life, and I think the same thing is true for you. So just be careful because if you are feeling like you're not getting what you want from people on the team, like they don't share your level of enthusiasm. They don't share your level of initiative. They don't share your drive. You know, they're skipping out a little early. They're coming a little late. They're just not quite... The first person to look at is you.

Do you have clear expectations? Do they have clear goals? And if they've been in the job for a while, have we kind of shaken the thing up? It might be time. You're shaking yourself up. I know you are because you're an entrepreneur. You're always on the next level. But because you feel guilty, and you don't want to ask them to do it, you don't do the same for the team. But that's where the rub gets you, because then over time they don't match you. And that's why we end up outgrowing people. And I think you give it a better shake at not outgrowing people who have been loyal, who have been a part of your team, who are so integral to your success, that you invite them to come with you and see if they can. But that's on you. That's on you to do. Okay?

But I think one of the kisses of death of an entrepreneurial business are team members who say, "We don't do it that way. Well, that's not how we've always done it." Listen to me. That doesn't work in an entrepreneur's business. Even, "Well, we already tried that and it didn't work." Well, we're going to try it again. Right?

So when you're met with this sort of resistance because people want to stay comfortable, the person that you need to leverage in those moments is you, leaning in and evaluating your ask. Your accountability structures. Your committee strategy. Your feedback. That's your job.

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Now if you lean into that, which is exactly what I teach you in How to CEO, if you lean into that and they can't come with you, that's very different than if you lean into that and then they kind of were like, "Oh, okay. I thought we were just going to relax for a little bit. Oh no. Never mind." And they come with you. That's good news. But don't just assume they should know. Okay? Because I really do believe that human beings are lovely, and kind, and generous. And they are also seekers of the path of least resistance.

We all just want things to be as simple and easy as possible. Why wouldn't we? And so if that's true, that will creep in to your company if you're not cautious. So we just have to keep it going. We've got to keep that as, was it Stephen Covey said or Franklin, one of them. Like, "Sharpen the saw." We have to do that. And I think annually, we just sort of make sure that we really have invested in and then expected out of the team what we need to be the next version of our business, to really drive that.

Okay? So when you have employees who settle, the first person you have to look at is you. Thanks for tuning in today. Talk to you again soon.

One more thing before you go. In a world of digital courses and online content, I like to work with my clients live because I know that when you have someone you can work with, ask questions of, and meet with, you're so much more likely to get the success that you want. So head on over to howtoCEOlive.com to learn more about our very exciting, very exclusive program just for female entrepreneurs. We'll see you there.